

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

CLAIMS

1. (original) The use of ulvans, in particular extracted from green algae of the genus *Ulva* or *Enteromorpha*, or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides, as elicitors of the mechanisms for nitrogen absorption and protein synthesis.
2. (currently amended) The use as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the abovementioned ulvans are extracted from algae chosen from the group consisting of the following species: *Ulva armoricana*, *Ulva rigida*, *Ulva rotundata*, *Ulva lactuca*, *Enteromorpha intestinalis* and *Enteromorpha compressa*.
3. (currently amended) The use as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2, characterized in that~~ wherein the abovementioned extracts are obtained by means of a method generally comprising the following steps: washing, milling, extraction (solid-liquid separation) and, optionally, fractionation, concentration and dehydration.
4. (currently amended) The use as claimed in claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the abovementioned ulvan-derived oligosaccharides are obtained by acid hydrolysis or enzymatic hydrolysis.
5. (currently amended) The use as claimed in ~~one of the claims 1 to 4, characterized in that~~ claim 1, wherein the ulvans or ulvan-derived oligosaccharides are given to the plants:
 - either in liquid form via the leaves or in nutritive solutions for the roots in an amount of from 0.1 to 100g per liter, and preferably of the order of 1g per liter,
 - or in solid form, for example, in pulverulent or granulated products in an amount of 10 to 1000g, and preferably of the order of 200g per hectare.
6. (currently amended) A method of improving the nitrogen absorption and protein synthesis of plants, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it comprises the application, to said

plants or soils, of an effective amount of ulvans, in particular extracted from green algae of the genus *Ulva* or *Enteromorpha*, or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides.

7. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 6, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the application to the plants is carried out via the leaves or via the roots.
8. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 6 ~~or 7, characterized in that~~ ,wherein the abovementioned ulvans or ulvan-derived oligosaccharides are used in an amount of:
 - from 0.1g to 100g per liter, and preferably of the order of 1g per liter, when applied in liquid form via the leaves or in nutritive solutions for the roots,
 - from 10 to 1000g, and preferably of the order of 200g per hectare, when applied in solid form, for example, in pulverulent or granulated fertilizers.
9. (currently amended) A fertilizing product, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein is comprises an effective amount of at least one ulvan, in particular extracted from green algae of the genus *Ulva* or *Enteromorpha*, or an ulvan-derived oligosaccharide, optionally in combination with one or more fertilizing substances.
10. (currently amended) The fertilizing product as claimed in claim 9, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein it is:
 - either the form of a liquid and in that it contains an amount of ulvans or of ulvan-derived oligosaccharides of from 0.1g to 100g per liter;
 - or in the form of a solid, in particular in the form of a powder or granules and in that it contains the amount of ulvans or ulvan-derived oligosaccharides which makes it possible to apply from 10 to 1000g, and preferably of the order of 200g per hectare.